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February 18, 2009

EXHIBIT 12 HUH
DATE 2-18-09
HB 516

Representative Arlene Becker, Chair
House Human Services Committee
Montana State House of Representatives
PO Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Kathy McGowan, representing the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) and its project, the Montana Pain Initiative. ACS CAN and the American Cancer Society know that the best way to reduce secondhand tobacco smoke exposure is to fully implement state laws that prevent public and workplace exposure to secondhand smoke. Our number one priority is to work with you to fully implement the Montana Clean Indoor Air Act that will assure that all workers in Montana are protected from exposure to the toxins in secondhand smoke. With that said, we also would like to be listed on the record as a supporter of HB516 as there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

ACS CAN is the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society that supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem.

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the Montana, equaling approximately 1,400 deaths every year. More than 30 percent of all cancer deaths are attributable to smoking and tobacco use. Secondhand smoke is a major health hazard proven to cause lung cancer, heart disease and emphysema. With 4,000 chemicals and more than 60 carcinogens – including arsenic and polonium – secondhand smoke is responsible for an estimated 150 lung cancer deaths in nonsmoking adults each year. Overall, tobacco costs our Montana over \$277 million in direct health care costs annually, and an additional \$294 million in lost productivity.

Montana and cities such as Bozeman, Missoula, Helena and Great Falls have been at the frontlines of tobacco control by legislating and implementing effective, proven strategies to reduce youth initiation; encourage current users to quit and to protect all from secondhand smoke. Currently more than half of the United States population is covered by a smoke-free law and almost every single state has increased its cigarette tax in the last several years.

Still, there is more work to be done as we are starting to see the progress we've made in reducing youth smoking initiation slip away. Funding for tobacco prevention programs and coverage for

cessation services, as well as continuing to pass tobacco tax increases and smoke-free laws, remain top priorities.

Deaths from tobacco can be prevented if our nation seriously and comprehensively addresses tobacco and makes a long-term investment in a sustained campaign to prevent tobacco-related disease and death, including implementing the strategies that have already been proven effective.

Although this legislation is not one of the three major strategies that ACS CAN knows significantly reduce youth initiation, we do feel that it is an important measure in heightening the awareness about the harmful effects of exposure to the toxins in secondhand smoke.

Thank you for your support of reducing the number of people exposed to secondhand tobacco smoke by fully implementing the Montana Clean Indoor Air Act and for your consideration of HB516.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy McGowan
Lobbyist